

Message Text

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41

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

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R 242152Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 765

INFO AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

USCINCSO

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USCINCSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR PBOR MCAP BL CI

SUBJ: BOLIVIAN GOVERNMENT DISMISSES RUMORS OF TROOP MOVEMENTS ON
CHILEAN BORDER

REF: SANTIAGO 3784; SANTIAGO 3768

1. BOLIVIAN MINISTER OF DEFENSE AND MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
HAVE ENERGETICALLY REJECTED STORY PROPAGATED BY CHILEAN CONGRESSMAN
JORGE INSUNZA THAT BOLIVIAN ARMED FORCES ARE ENGAGED IN SUSPICIOUS
MANEUVERS ALONG BORDER PREPARATORY TO INVADING CHILE. MINISTER
OF DEFENSE JAIME FLORENTINO MENDIETA " EMPHATICALLY AND CATEGORICALLY"

DENIED ANY INTENTION ON PART OF BOLIVIAN MILITARY TO TAKE ADVANTAGE
OF CURRENT UNREST IN CHILE FOR ASSAULT ON THAT COUNTRY. HE DESCRIBED
INSUNZA'S STATEMENT AS A DEVICE FOR DISTRACTIG ATTENTION OF CHILEAN
PEOPLE FROM THEIR MOE IMMEDIATE PROBLEMS. MEANWHILE, AN OFFICIAL
DECLARATION OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY STATED THAT "BOLIVIA IS AN
ESSENTIALLY PACIFIST COUNTRY" AND PREFERS TO SETTLE ITS DIFFERENCES
WITH OTHER STATES BY MEANS OF PEACEFUL DIALOGUE. SPECIFICALLY
ADDRESSING ISSUE OF BOLIVIAN DESIRE FOR ACCESS TO SEA, FONMINISTRY
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COMMUNIQUE NOTED THAT CHILEAN AND BOLIVIAN FOREIGN MINISTERS RECENTLY

HAD AMICABLE DISCUSSION OF THIS AND OTHER BILATERAL ISSUES DURING RECENT MEETING OF ANDEAN FOREIGN MINISTERS IN LIMA.

2. DEPARTMENT AND EMBASSY SANTIAGO WILL ALSO HAVE NOTED VIGOROUS DENIAL ISSUED BY BOLIVIAN AMBASSADOR VALENCIA IN WASHINGTON.

3. COMMENT: STATEMENTS OF LEADING GOB SPOKESMAN ON INSUNZA'S ALLEGATIONS ACCURATELY REFLECT OFFICIAL BOLIVIAN THINKING ON RELATIONS WITH CHILE AT THIS TIME. DESPITE CONSTANT REITERATION OF REVANCHIST "TO THE SEA" THEME IN PUBLIC STATEMENTS BY CIVILIAN AND MILITARY OFFICIALS, BOLIVIAN GOVERNMENT REALISTICALLY ACCEPTS FACT THAT RELATIVELY FEEBLE STATE OF BOLIVIAN ARMED FORCES RULES OUT ANY LARGE-SCALE CONFRONTATION WITH THEIR CHILEAN COUNTERPARTS FOR FORSEEABLE FUTURE.

BREWIN

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